



NO. 7
FEB.-MAR.



10¢

SHOCK

SUSPENSTORIES

JOLTING TALES OF
TENSION
IN THE
EC TRADITION!



IN THIS ISSUE:
E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY
ROY BRODBURY

HUMOR IN A JUGULAR VEIN

TALES CALCULATED TO DRIVE YOU

6¢

No. 3
JAN-FEB

MAD

6¢

10¢



"OH, THEY SAID THERE WAS A SQUIPPE IN THE CRYPTS! THEY'D NO ONE HERE BUT A LITTLE OWL!"

GAY, WHERE IS EVERYONE GOING?

WHY, DOWN TO THE NEWSSTAND, OF COURSE, TO PICK UP THE LATEST ISSUE OF **MAD!**



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THE SHOCKING FINAL TWIST TO THIS
ELECTRIFYING TALE WILL TERRIFY YOU!

BEAUTY AND THE BEACH!

JOHN MILTON LOOKED AROUND UNCOMFORTABLY AT THE MEN WATCHING HIS WIFE MARY! SHE KNELT UPON THE DAZZLING WHITE SAND BEACH, CRITICALLY SURVEYING HER MAKE-UP IN A SMALL COMPACT MIRROR, EACH TURN OF HER CURVACIOUS FIGURE REVEALED INTIMATELY BY THE SCANT TWO-PIECE BATHING SUIT SHE WORE...

MARY! FOR PETE'S SAKE! PUT ON A BEACH-ROBE! THAT THAT BATHING SUIT IS ALMOST OBSCENE! PEOPLE ARE LOOKING AT YOU...

OH, TAKE IT EASY, JOHNNY! I LIKE PEOPLE TO LOOK AT ME! I'VE GOT A NICE FIGURE! WHY SHOULDN'T I SHOW IT OFF?

PERCY FULLMAN WRINKLED HIS NOSE IN DISGUST AS, FROM HIS HIDING PLACE IN THE SHADE OF THE BEACH CHAIR, HE STUDIED HIS WIFE, GINGER! SHE SAT ON THE BLANKET IN THE BLAZING SUN, STROKING HER TANNED ARMS AND SHOULDERS, SPREADING THE TACKY, PERFUMED SUN-TAN OIL OVER THEM...

LET'S GO HOME, GINGER! YOU KNOW HOW I HATE THE BEACH! WE'VE BEEN HERE THREE HOURS ALREADY...

OH, SHUT UP, PERCY! I LOVE THE SUN! I WANT TO GET A GOOD SUN-TAN! READ A BOOK OR SOMETHING, HUH?



**A CRIME
SUSPENSORY**

THE TWO COUPLES HAD SPREAD THEIR BLANKETS SCARCELY TEN FEET FROM EACH OTHER ON THE CROWDED BEACH! JOHN AND MARY MILTON, SHE SHOWING OFF HER ATTRACTIVE FIGURE, AND HE FUMING, EMBARRASSED AND JEALOUS.

IT ISN'T NICE, MARY! I'M YOUR HUSBAND! NO ONE SHOULD SEE YOU UNDRESSED LIKE THAT... EXCEPT ME.

DON'T BE SO POSSESSIVE, JOHN! I'M NOT ONE OF YOUR STAMP ALBUMS...



... AND GINGER AND PERCY FULLMAN. SHE ADORING THE SUN, BASKING IN IT, AND HE COVERING, FULLY DRESSED, BENEATH THE BEACH CHAIR CANOPY...

GINGER! PLEASE! IT'S SO HOT! I DIDN'T SEE HOW YOU CAN SIT OUT THERE SO LONG! I'M SOAKING WET FROM PERSPIRATION!

OH, GO SOAK YOUR HEAD, PERCY! NO WONDER YOU'RE SO HOT! LOOK AT YOU! SHIRT... TROUSERS... SOCKS... SHOES... HAT! NO WONDER...



BUT, GINGER! I HAVE TO DRESS LIKE THIS! YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO ME IF I GET THE LEAST LITTLE BIT SUNBURNED!

THEN JUST SUFFER IN SILENCE, PERCY! I WANT TO GET SUNBURNED! I LOVE IT...

MARY! I DON'T LIKE MEN TO LOOK AT YOU! I CAN JUST IMAGINE WHAT THEY'RE THINKING!

CAN YOU? WELL, A GIRL LIKES TO KNOW SHE HASN'T LOST HER APPEAL TO OTHERS... AND THAT HER HUSBAND CAN STILL GET JEALOUS!

OH, DEAR! I'M ALL OUT OF SUN-TAN OIL, PERCY! RUN AND GET ME ANOTHER BOTTLE, WILL YOU?

HUH? BUT THE CONCESSION IS WAY OVER THERE! I'LL HAVE TO WALK IN THE SUN...



WHERE ARE THE KIDS, MARY? I DON'T SEE THEM!

HOW SHOULD I KNOW? I THOUGHT YOU WERE WATCHING THEM!



THERE THEY ARE... DOWN BY THE WATER! I'LL GET THEM! I... OH, EXCUSE ME!

EXCUSE ME! IT WAS MY FAULT! I'M SORRY!



AND SO JOHN MILTON'S AND PERCY FULLMAN'S PATHS CROSS... THERE ON THAT CROWDED BEACH! WILL THEIR PATHS CROSS AGAIN... AT SOME FUTURE DATE? PERHAPS! LET'S SEE

I BES YOUR PARDON, MA'AM! I I COULDN'T HELP ADMIRING YOUR BEAUTIFUL FACE AND FIGURE! ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF..

LOOK, CHUN! MY HUSBAND DOESN'T LIKE STRANGERS TO LOOK AT ME, NO LESS TALK TO ME!

PLEASE DON'T GET ME WRONG, MA'AM! MY NAME IS CEDRIC ABELS! I'M A PUBLICITY MAN! WHAT I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT IS STRICTLY BUSINESS!

WELL, YOU'D BETTER TALK FAST, MR ABELS! MY HUSBAND WILL BE BACK SHORTLY



I COULDN'T HELP OVERHEARING YOU TELL YOUR HUSBAND TO BUY A BOTTLE OF 'BRONZE-BURN SUN-TAN OIL,' MA'AM! ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF

NICE LINE, MISTER, BUT NO DICE! PERCY MAY LOOK PUNY, BUT HE'S GOT A HORRIBLE TEMPER!

OH, NO! I'M NOT... WELL... IT ISN'T THAT AT ALL! MY NAME IS TOM SIMMENS! I'M A DIRECTOR FOR A BIG ADVERTISING AGENCY! 'BRONZE-BURN' IS OUR CLIENT! THIS IS STRICTLY BUSINESS!

OH! I'M SORRY WHAT DO YOU WANT? A TESTIMONIAL?



AND EVERY YEAR, I RUN THE 'THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HOUSE-WIFE IN AMERICA CONTEST' DOWN IN OH, I ATLANTIC CITY! NOW COULDN'T I'M SURE, IF YOU ENTERED IT... COMPLIMENT..

BUT JOHNNY WOULDN'T LIKE IT AT ALL!

YOU'D HAVE A GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING, MRS. MILTON! THINK WHAT IT WOULD MEAN..

NOT A TESTIMONIAL, MA'AM! I'D LIKE YOU TO BECOME 'THE BRONZE-BURN GIRL!' I'D LIKE TO BUILD A BIG ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN AROUND YOU!

WHY I'M FLATTERED, MR. SIMMENS! BUT PERCY..





...TREMENDOUS PUBLICITY, MRS. MILTON! PERHAPS A CHANCE AT A HOLLYWOOD CAREER...

I DON'T KNOW...



...A LOT OF MONEY, MRS. FULLMAN! YOUR PICTURE WOULD BE IN EVERY NATIONAL MAGAZINE!

I DON'T KNOW...



THINK IT OVER MRS. MILTON! HERE'S MY GARD...

THINK IT OVER MRS. FULLMAN! HERE'S MY GARD...



WHO WAS THAT MAN YOU WERE TALKING TO, MARY? I SAW HIM GO AWAY AS I GAVE...

HIM? I. I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT WHEN WE GET HOME! C'MON!



I SAW YOU TALKING TO HIM, GINGER! WHO WAS HE?

I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT. BUT NOT NOW! LET'S GO...



THAT NIGHT, IN THE MILTON HOME, AFTER THE CHILDREN WERE PUT TO BED...

WHAT? MY WIFE DISPLAYING HERSELF LIKE A COMMON... A COMMON... I WON'T HAVE IT! I WON'T HAVE MEN STARING AT YOU WHILE YOU PARADE AROUND PRACTICALLY UNDRESSED!

WELL I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU'LL HAVE! IT'S MY BIG CHANGE AND I'M TAKING IT!



WHILE ACROSS TOWN, AT THE FULLMAN RESIDENCE...

GO AHEAD! MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF! 'THE BRONZE-BURN GIRL!' BAN! YOU AND YOUR STUPID SUN-BATHING! WELL, DON'T EXPECT ME TO FOLLOW YOU AROUND...

IT'S MY BIG CHANGE AND I'M TAKING IT! AND YOU'RE COMING WITH ME!

SOON AFTERWARD, IN ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY...

AND NOW, THE **WINNER OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HOUSEWIFE IN AMERICA CONTEST... MRS. MARY MILTON...**

HOLD IT MRS. MILTON!



WHILE, SOMEWHERE SOUTH, ON A HOT BEACH UNDER THE BLAZING SUN...

TURN YOUR HEAD THIS WAY, MRS. FULLMAN.

SMILE, MRS. FULLMAN!



AT HIS JOB IN A PLASTICS FACTORY...

HEY, MILTON! I SAW YOUR WIFE'S PICTURE IN THE PAPER! YAHOO! SOME FIGURE!

SHUT UP!



AS, ON A BEACH...

THAT'S THE BRONZE-BURN GIRL! AND THAT'S HER HUSBAND...

HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE'S ENJOYING HIMSELF!



DADDY! WHEN IS MOMMY COMING HOME?

SOON, CHILDREN! SOON! NOW, EAT YOUR DINNER!



I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER, GINGER! EVERY DAY... OUT IN THE HOT SUN! I CAN'T STAND IT!

I'M MAKING MORE MONEY NOW THAN YOU'LL EVER MAKE... SO YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO STAND IT! I'M NOT GIVING IT UP!



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU'RE ONLY HOME FOR A FEW DAYS?

MR. ABELS WANTS ME TO GO ON TOUR! THERE ARE FOUR BEAUTY CONTESTS OUT WEST HE WANTS ME TO ENTER!



A MONTH WENT BY! TWO... FOUR! GINGER FULLMAN MOVED AROUND THE COUNTRY, ADVERTIZING BRONZE-BURN SUN-TAN OIL! AND PERCY FULLMAN WAS FORCED TO GO WITH HER...

IT'S HOT, GINGER! I CAN'T TAKE IT!
IT'S WONDERFUL!
HOLD IT, MRS. FULLMAN!



MARY MILTON WON BEAUTY CONTEST AFTER BEAUTY CONTEST! AND JOHN MILTON WAS FORCED TO STAY HOME AND LOOK AFTER THEIR CHILDREN

IT'S MOMMY'S PICTURE, DADDY! LOOK! WHEN'S SHE COMING HOME, DADDY?
DISGUSTING! EXPDING HERSELF LIKE A COMMON TRAMP!
SOON, CHILDREN! SOON!



FINALLY...
FOR SIX MONTHS YOU'VE DRAGGED ME AROUND FROM BEACH TO BEACH OUT IN THE BURNING SUN! WELL I'M THROUGH! THROUGH. DO YOU HEAR?



OH, COOL OFF, PERCY! I LOVE THE SUN!
YOU'RE COMING HOME WITH ME, GINGER! YOU'RE FINISHED WITH SUN-BATHING...
NO! I'M STAYING! I'M GOING ON BEING THE BRONZE-BURN GIRL! I LIKE IT...



ALL RIGHT, GINGER! IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT...



WHILE... NO! I WON'T LET YOU GO AWAY AGAIN! I WON'T LET YOU MAKE A SPECTACLE OF YOURSELF!
OH, CAN IT, JOHNNY! PEOPLE ADMIRE BEAUTY! THEY ADMIRE ME!



YOU'RE STAYING HOME WITH ME, MARY! YOU'RE THROUGH RUNNING AROUND HALF NAKED... MEN STARING AT YOU...
NO! I'M GOING ON YOUR AGAIN! I LIKE BEING STARED AT!



ALL RIGHT, MARY! IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT...





GINGER FULLMAN STOPPED AS SHE CAME THROUGH THE DOOR TO THE NEXT ROOM...

WHAT ARE THEY... ON THE CEILING? LIGHTS? YOU'LL SEE... MY DEAR!



THEN, THE ROOM WAS FILLED WITH SCREAMS AS PERCY CAUGHT GINGER AND TIED HER TO A TABLE...

PERCY! LET ME GO!

YAAAAAAAHH!



FOR THE ROOM WAS SUDDENLY FILLED WITH A BLINDING LIGHT... HOT AND WHITE...

NOT EXACTLY LIGHTS, GINGER! SUN LAMPS! FORTY OF THEM!



WHEN MR. CEDRIC ABELS CAME TO CALL THE NEXT MORNING TO TAKE HER ON ANOTHER TOUR, JOHN USHERED HIM INTO THE LIVING ROOM! THERE, ENCASED IN A BLOCK OF CLEAR PLASTIC, GROTESQUELY PRESERVED IN ITS DEATH THROES, HUNG THE TWISTED BODY OF MARY MILTON...

NOW SHE CAN BE... EH... EH... ADMIRERED... EH... EH... ALWAYS! GOOD LORD!



AND WHEN MR. TOM SIMMENS CAME TO CALL THE NEXT MORNING TO TAKE HER OUT TO ANOTHER ADVERTISING STUNT, PERCY USHERED HIM INTO THE LIVING ROOM! THERE, UNDER THE BATTERY OF NOW-COOL SUNLAMPS, CRISPILY TOASTED TO A BRONZE-BROWN, LAY THE BLISTERED BODY OF GINGER FULLMAN...

SHE NEVER... EH... EH... COULD GET ENOUGH... EH... EH... SUN! CHOKER!



THE END

YOU'LL BE JOLTED OUT OF YOUR SEATS BY THE SOLID IMPACT OF THIS GRIPPING NARRATIVE!

THE BRIBE!

INSPECTOR FRANK WILSON OF THE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT STOOD IN THE FOYER OF THE BLUE SWAN CLUB SURVEYING THE NOISY, SMOKEY SCENE BEFORE HIM! THE TABLES, CROWDED TOGETHER, WERE ALL OCCUPIED! THE TWO-BY-FOUR EXCUSE FOR A DANCE FLOOR WAS JAMMED WITH GYRATING COUPLES, EACH PRESSED TOGETHER IN AN INTIMATE ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW THE SENSUOUS RHYTHMS OF THE RHUMBA ORGHESTRA! HERE AND THERE, A STRUGGLING WAITER PUSHED HIS WAY THROUGH THE MELEE, CARRYING AN ORDER TO HIS STATION! THE WHOLE SCENE WAS ONE OF UTTER CONFUSION! THE HEADWAITER SHOOK HIS HEAD...

THE HEADWAITER POINTED ACROSS THE LAUGHTER AND THE SMOKE TO A DOOR MARKED "PRIVATE"! INSPECTOR WILSON PUSHED HIS WAY TOWARD IT! THE BRASSY ORGHESTRA EXPLODED INTO A SAMBA TEMPO AS HE FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR...

SORRY, SIR!
WE'RE ALL
FILLED UP...

I'M NOT LOOKING FOR A
TABLE! WHERE'S
THE OFFICE...

HEY! S'MATTER, BUB?
CAN'T YUH READ?
THAT DOOR SAYS "PRIVATE"
THAT MEANS KNOCK...

YOU WOULDN'T HAVE
HEARD ME IF I'D'VE
EXPLODED A BOMB
OUT THERE? ER, WHO'S
IN CHARGE? WHO
OWNS THIS PLACE?



WHO'S
ASKIN'?

FRANK WILSON FIRE
DEPARTMENT VIOLATIONS
INSPECTOR...



**A SHOCK
SUSPENSORY**

WOOD

THE MAN SEATED BEHIND THE EXPENSIVE LOOKING SHINY DESK SHOT A QUICK GLANCE AT THE MAN STANDING BESIDE HIM...

ER... AH... WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHER INSPECTOR...
FOSTER, I THINK HIS NAME WAS?

TRANSFERRED UPTOWN! THIS IS *MY* TERRITORY NOW! YOU'VE GOT A NICE SIZE CROUD OUT THERE TONIGHT, MR...
MR...

CUSKO! NICK CUSKO! YEAH! ER... NICE CROWD...

WHAT'S THE *LAWFUL CAPACITY* ALLOWED FOR YOUR PLACE, MR. CUSKO?



HOW SHOULD I KNOW! TREE...FOUR HUNDRED!

THREE OR FOUR HUNDRED... IN THIS PLACE? THEN, YOU MUST HAVE *SEVERAL EXITS...*

YOU CAME THROUGH IT

YOU MEAN THERE'S ONLY *ONE* EXIT...

LOOK, INSPECTOR! I GOT A *NICE BUSINESS* HERE! DON'T GO MAKING THINGS *DIFFICULT* FOR ME, HUH? I'M SURE YOU CAN BE... ER... *SATISFIED!*

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW *FOSTER ALLOWED* YOU TO STAY OPEN! IT'S A *DIRECT VIOLATION* OF THE FIRE LAWS...



WHY DON'T YOU TALK TO **FOSTER**, INSPECTOR! MAYBE HE HAD HIS *REASONS!*

I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO *REVOKE YOUR LICENSE*, MR. CUSKO! I DON'T CARE *WHAT FOSTER'S REASONS* WERE! THE FACT STILL STANDS...

NOW, LET'S NOT DO ANYTHING *RASH*, INSPECTOR!



I'M SORRY, GENTLEMEN! THE LAW STRICTLY REQUIRES THAT THERE BE *ADEQUATE EXITS* PROVIDED IN *RELATIONSHIP* TO THE AMOUNT OF PATRONS TO BE *ACCOMMODATED...*

GET WISE, WILSON! *FORGET* WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN HERE TONIGHT! WE'LL TAKE *GOOD CARE* OF YOU! JUST NAME YOUR *PRICE...*



INSPECTOR WILSON SLAMMED THE DOOR TO THE BLUE SWAN CLUB'S PRIVATE OFFICE AND STOOD OUTSIDE IN THE NOISE AND THE SMOKE, BREATHING HARD...

THE DIRTY @#%!'x?S!
OFFERING ME A...BRIDE!



HE LOOKED AROUND, MENTALLY CALCULATING THE AMOUNT OF CUSTOMERS JAMMED INTO THE SMALL BASEMENT NIGHTCLUB...

THERE MUST BE FIVE HUNDRED PEOPLE IN HERE...AT LEAST! FIVE HUNDRED PEOPLE, AND ONLY ONE EXIT!



THEN, HE PUSHED HIS WAY THROUGH THE CROWD AND UP THE STAIRS OUT INTO THE COOL NIGHT AIR! THE TINNY MUSIC OF THE BLUE SWAN'S RHUMBA BAND DRIFTED OUT BEHIND HIM...

...AND FOSTER! IT'LL MEAN CURTAINS FOR HIM WHEN I REPORT THIS IN THE FOOL! THE STUPID FOOL!



A GENTLE SOBBING FILLED THE APARTMENT AS INSPECTOR WILSON OPENED THE DOOR! HE SNAPPED ON THE LIGHT! JEAN, HIS TWENTY YEAR OLD DAUGHTER, LOOKED UP FROM HER PROSTRATE POSITION ON THE COUCH! TEARS SPILLED OUT OF HER RED EYES AND DOWN HER CHEEKS...

JEANNIE! HONEY!
WHAT IS IT?

OH, DADDY! SOB
DADDY...



SHE CLUMPS TO HIM, HER BODY QUIVERING! HE SOOTHED HER...COMFORTED HER! WILSON HAD BEEN BOTH MOTHER AND FATHER TO JEAN EVER SINCE HIS WIFE HAD DIED...

IT...IT'S TED'S FAMILY!
SOB! THEY WANT A...SOB...
BIG WEDDING!

BUT, JEANNIE! YOU
YOU KNOW WE
CAN'T AFFORD...



I...I KNOW, DADDY!
I TRIED TO TELL
THEM! TED UNDER-
STANDS! BUT...SOB...
SOB...THEY DON'T!

NOW, STOP YOUR CRYING,
BABY! WE'LL WORK OUT
SOMETHING! I'LL BORROW
THE MONEY! WE'LL WORK
IT OUT...



THE ANGRY RINGING OF THE DOOR BELL EXPLODED THROUGH THE APARTMENT...

NO! I WON'T LET YOU
GO INTO HOCK FOR THE
REST OF YOUR LIFE FOR
SOMETHING I DON'T THINK
IS THAT IMPORTANT, I
TOLD TED THAT...OH!

I WONDER WHO
THAT CAN BE THIS
TIME OF NIGHT?
MAYBE IT'S YOUR
YOUNG MAN! BETTER
GO IN AND TIGHTEN
YOUR FACE...



BUT THE MAN OUTSIDE THE DOOR WAS NOT JEAN'S FIANCÉ! IT WAS...

HELLO, FRANK! NICK TOLD ME YOU WERE IN THE BLUE SWAN TONIGHT! I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU, FRANK. BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING!

NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT, FOSTER! I'VE GOT TO REPORT 'EM! THAT'S ALL THERE IS...



THEY'VE BEEN PAYING OFF, FRANK! YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO BE KICKED OFF THE FORGE... WOULD YOU? THAT'S WHAT IT WOULD MEAN IF YOU MADE YOUR REPORT!

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO? IT'S YOUR HEADACHE! YOU SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT IT BEFORE YOU ACCEPTED THEIR MONEY!



LOOK, FRANK! THEY PAID ME A C-NOTE A MONTH! THAT'S OVER A GRAND A YEAR! FIGURE IT OUT FOR YOURSELF! ADD THAT TO WHAT THE CITY PAYS YOU...

MY DAUGHTER'S INSIDE, FOSTER! KEEP IT LOW!

IT'S EASY MONEY, FRANK! YOU JUST LOOK THE OTHER WAY... THAT'S ALL!

A GRAND! THAT'S... A LOT OF MONEY! THAT COULD MAKE AN AWFULLY NICE WEDDING.

HUH? WHAT ABOUT A WEDDING?

N-NOTHING! ER. LOOK, FOSTER! LET ME THINK ABOUT IT, EH? I'LL LET YOU KNOW!



FRANK WILSON CLOSED THE DOOR AND STOOD THINKING A MOMENT! JEAN CAME OUT OF THE BEDROOM, SMILING...

TEO? NO, JEANNIE, BABY! IT WASN'T TEO! IT WAS... SOMEONE... FOR ME!



HE LOOKED DOWN AT HIS LOVELY DAUGHTER...

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT, JEANNIE! YOU CAN TELL YOUR YOUNG MAN'S FAMILY THAT THERE WILL BE A BIG WEDDING... THE BIGGEST THEY'VE EVER SEEN!

OH, DADDY! DADDY!



THE NEXT DAY, FRANK WILSON...
INSPECTOR...FIRE DEPARTMENT...
WENT TO SEE NICK GUSKO...

NOW YOU'RE USING
YOUR HEAD, WILSON!
SAME ARRANGE-
MENT AS
FOSTER?



NOT
EXACTLY,
GUSKO! I
WANT NINE
ALL IN ONE
LUMP! A YEAR'S
PAYMENTS!

YOU CRAZY?
SUPPOSE YOU
GET TRANS-
FERRED AND
SOME OTHER
EAGER-BEAVER
HAS TO BE BOUGHT
OFF! I'M PAYING
DOUBLE!



THAT'S THE
CHANGE YOU'LL
HAVE TO
TAKE, GUSKO!
THAT'S MY
DEAL! TAKE
IT...OR...

NICK GUSKO GOT TO HIS FEET, WENT
TO A SMALL FLOOR SAFE, AND
REMOVED...

HERE Y'ARE,
WILSON!
1200 BUCKS!



THANKS, GUSKO!

ARRANGEMENTS FOR JEAN'S WEDDING WERE MADE!
THE DATE WAS SET! ONE NIGHT...

WELL, YOUNG LADY!
DON'T YOU LOOK PRETTY!
GOING OUT ON THE TOWN
TONIGHT WITH TED?



UH-HUH! HE'LL BE
HERE IN A MOMENT!
OH-OH! THERE HE
IS NOW!

READY,
HONEY?



READY, TED, DARLING!
G'NIGHT, DADDY!

GOOD-NIGHT, KIDS!
HAVE A GOOD
TIME!

THEY WERE GONE! FRANK GLANCED AT THE MANTEL
CLOCK! IT WAS ALMOST NINE! HE YAWNED AND
STRETCHED...

HO, HUM! I'M TIRED T'NIGHT!
GUESS I'LL HIT THE HWY EARLY!



[IT SEEMED TO FRANK THAT HE'D ONLY BEEN
ASLEEP A SHORT TIME WHEN HE WAS SUDDENLY
AWAKENED BY A SCREAMING WAIL! FAR BELOW, ON
THE STREET, A FIRE-ENGINE SHRIEKED BY, ITS
SIREN BLASTING...]

HUH? OH! YAWN! FIRE...
SOMEWHERE! WHAT TIME IS
IT, ANYWAY? HMM! TWELVE-
THIRTY! HO, HUM...



AND THEN THE PHONE BY THE BED BEGAN TO RING ANXIOUSLY...

IT WAS LIKE A NIGHTMARE FOR WILSON, DRESSING AND SPEEDING ACROSS TOWN! WHEN HE ARRIVED...



H'HELLO? HELLO, FRANK? THIS IS FOSTER! BETTER GO DOWN HERE... QUICK! IT'S THE BLUE SWAN! IT'S ON FIRE! IT'S HORRIBLE! HORRIBLE! THERE MUST BE SIX HUNDRED PEOPLE TRAPPED INSIDE... CHOKE...

HELLO, FRANK? THIS IS FOSTER! BETTER GO DOWN HERE... QUICK! IT'S THE BLUE SWAN! IT'S ON FIRE! IT'S HORRIBLE! HORRIBLE! THERE MUST BE SIX HUNDRED PEOPLE TRAPPED INSIDE... CHOKE...



FOSTER! WHAT HAPPENED? OH, LORD...

THEY WERE LIKE ANIMALS! ONLY FIVE OR SIX PEOPLE GOT OUT! THEY'RE OVER THERE... BURNED HORRIBLY! THE REST... THE REST... YOU... YOU SHOULD HAVE HEARD IT... THE CRYING... THE SCREAMING...

THE FIVE SURVIVORS WERE QUESTIONED! ONE OF THE SURVIVORS TOLD INSPECTOR WILSON, BETWEEN GASPS OF PAIN, WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

IT... WAS DURING THE SHOW! THEY HAD SOME JUGGLER! HE JUGGLED LIT TORCHES! THE CURTAIN CAUGHT! THEY STAMPEDED TOWARD THE EXIT... BLOCKING IT... BEHIND ME...



THEY BEGAN TO BRING OUT THE CHARRED BODIES! ONE AFTER THE OTHER...

THERE'LL BE AN INVESTIGATION, FOSTER! THEY'LL FIND OUT! OH, LORD! WHAT HAVE I DONE? I'VE MURDERED THEM... ALL OF THEM!

SHUT UP, YOU FOOL! SOMEONE WILL HEAR YOU!



ALL NIGHT LONG, THEY BROUGHT THEM OUT! THE COVERED BODIES LINED THE SIDEWALK LIKE WHITE GRIVES. A POLICE CAPTAIN APPROACHED WILSON...

WILSON! I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU!

SURE... DONALDSON!



THE POLICE CAPTAIN DREW WILSON ASIDE...

WE WERE WORKING ON IDENTIFYING THE VICTIMS, FRANK! THE GIRL WHO WANDERS AROUND PHOTOGRAPHING THE CUSTOMERS OFFERED TO HELP! SHE ALWAYS TAKES THE PICTURES BEFORE THE SHOW, AND DEVELOPS THEM IN HER SHOP DOWN THE BLOCK! AFTER THE SHOW, SHE'D DELIVER THEM! SHE HAD A BIG BATCH OF PICTURES OF PEOPLE WHO... WHO DIED IN THERE! SHE HAD... THIS ONE!



CAPTAIN DONALDSON HELD UP A SHINY PHOTOGRAPH

JEANNIE! OH, GOD... JEANNIE! SHE WAS THERE TONIGHT!



INSPECTOR FRANK WILSON... FIRE DEPARTMENT... STAGGERED AWAY FROM THE CHARNAL SCENE, CLUTCHING THE GLOSSY PICTURE IN HIS SHAKING FIST...



WILDLY, HE MADE HIS WAY BACK TO THE APARTMENT...



HE DREW THE GUN FROM HIS NIGHT TABLE DRAWER! HE LIFTED IT... STARING INTO THE BLACK MUZZLE.



THE GUNSHOT ECHOED THROUGH THE DARK APARTMENT! THE BODY PITCHED FORWARD, SPRAWLING ANKWARDLY ON THE BEDROOM FLOOR...



THE TELEPHONE BEGAN TO RING! ITS INSISTANT JANGLE VIBRATED UPON DEAD EARS...



FAR AWAY A WOMAN AT A SWITCH-BOARD TURNED TO THE YOUNG COUPLE...

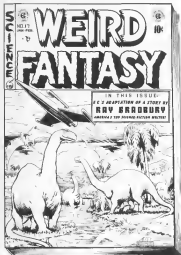


JEANNIE LOOKED AT TED... HER EYES SPARKLING WITH HAPPINESS.



E.C. FANS!

**WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST
OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION
MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR...**



**ANOTHER
"NEW TREND"**

ENTERTAINING COMIC!



**ON SALE NOW
AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!**

THE MOUNTAIN JACKAL

Tajik Kabal, the lawless Afghan chieftain, had sacked Border villages, burned colonial stations, and filled the mountain passes with bodiless heads and headless bodies for four unlettered years!

Kabal's roaming lanaches didn't stay long in one district, if that was any consolation to the Anglo-Indian outposts that guarded the Hurrum Hills. For a time, it seemed that Kabal's murderous raids and rampages had ceased. The British certainly hoped that Kabal had become arm-weary from swinging his deadly, double-edged, three-foot sword! Some expressed the hope that he had packed his band of cut-throats off to Russia, or even China—judging by their hardy endurance and the range they covered! But it soon became known that Tajik Kabal was settling down right in the Hurrum Hills! He was building a great citadel there, a great store-house for the loot he had already amassed and a great garrison from which to strike forth and amass more ill-gotten gains!

Tajik Kabal's biggest mistake was in choosing the site for his fortress. It was in the same district as Her Majesty's Fort Saint Patrick! The fort was so-called because its complement was composed mainly of the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars.

Seventy soldiers of F Company left the fort one early morning to attend a surprise "house-warming" at Tajik Kabal's! Their favorite bhut, young Jenga Shah, slapped the water-filled goatskin bag slung at his side in rhythm with the hooves of the plodding ammunition-mules.

The siege was a short one! Seventy Martin rifles formed a perimeter around Kabal's unfinished fortress and advanced upon it in an ever-tightening circle. A few of the besieged Snider rifles expressed a difference of opinion but were promptly quoted by the out-spoken Martins. And when the smoke cleared, there were still seventy British soldiers—and twenty less Pathan lanaches!

Six of the wisest Irish troopers provided a personal escort for Tajik Kabal. His line fig-

are towered a head above the Celtic guards that flanked him. But the aquiline profile of Tajk Kabal betrayed neither hope nor despair. He sorely missed his ornate Damascus blade, wrought of the finest tempered steel, for it had been like a third arm to him. The soldiers had given it to their faithful water-carrier, Jenga Shah, to carry back to the fort.

And as the triumphant war party weaved through the twisting passes that bottled up the torturous afternoon sun, all the joys of victory left Jenga Shah's heart! Jenga Shah, the orphan, recognized the flashing sword that he carried! Three years ago, this same sword had cleaved his loved ones from him and Tajk Kabal, the Mountain Jackal, had done the wielding! One thousand nights ago, Kabal's raiders had set upon his village, hacked away his household, and made him an orphan fleeing in the protective mantle of night!

It was night at Fort Saint Patrick! Tajk Kabal was already succumbing to the lonely confines of his dungeon. Then the water-carrier came to him, quietly and with a key!

He told Kabal that he would whistle like a bird as a signal that he had lured the trusting prison guard to the far side of the courtyard on some pretense. Then Kabal must open the cell door, let himself out of the prison, run for the nearest wall where a ladder would be propped in the shadows, and scale it to freedom! Kabal was bewildered but grateful!

Within the hour, a shrill whistle came from the other side of the courtyard! Tajk Kabal let himself out of his cell, slipped off his sandals, ran out of the unguarded prison, and padded noiselessly through the dark. The wall loomed before him! He could make out the ladder's shape, now!

With one great bound, he aimed his bare feet for the third rung, reaching his fingers forward to grasp a top-most rung simultaneously! All his weight was upon the rungs when he felt his fingers sliced away and his feet impaled to the bones on the bottom rung!

Too late, Tajk Kabal learned that 'He who lives by the sword, dies by the sword!' The rungs of the ladder were imbedded razor-sharp bayonets!



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SHOCK TALK

If we may wax serious, this issue, we'd like to bring to your attention a condition existing in the comic industry of which you are probably not aware! As you know, we have always considered you, our readers, more than mere customers - rather we have considered each and every one of you an integral part of the E.C. family. Accordingly, we have attempted to play things straight with you, and have brought our problems to you as they arise. The problem that we now face is a very serious one! Ever, few years, the comic industry collapses! The last big collapse was early in 1950. Several publishers went out of business, most others dropped titles, changed titles, or temporarily suspended operations. At that time, we at E.C. completely revised our line, and started from scratch with our new trend comics. For the last three years, you readers have been good to us! We have prospered, grown, and now publish 10 bi-monthlies. We were highly successful in horror, science-fiction, and then in war comics. Our success led to other publishers leading the stands with their horror, s.f., and war comics, leading the stands to extent that in September 1952, there were over 300 different comic magazines being published! An incredible total - an impossible total! Although more comic magazines are being sold to day than ever before, the total sales cannot support 300 titles. So the inevitable happened! Last March, the comic industry began to collapse again under the weight of this impossible number of titles. As this writing (early October), the field is filled with rumors of publisher after publisher either going out of business or dropping titles! Money is being lost in great gobs by virtually everyone in comics! Why are we troubling you, our readers, with all this? Two reasons first, to thank you! E.C. is a small outfit, as comic cut-throats go. Our capital reserve is relatively small. If IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THE FAITHFUL ISSUE

AFTER ISSUE BUYING HABIT OF YOU READERS, E.C. WOULD HAVE GONE DOWN THE DRAIN! For this - your loyalty and continued readership - we earnestly and sincerely thank you. As V.K. would put it, "We're all choked up!" Secondly, we are telling you all this because we want to ask a favor. There are STILL over 500 titles on the stands, and will be for some months! (It takes time to drop a title!) Thus far, although we're losing money on some of our titles, E.C. is standing firm, and we are continuing to publish all 10 magazines! The favor? Simply this: KEEP BUYING E.C. MAGAZINES! Please don't misunderstand. We don't want a single reader to spend a single dime that he needs for any thing important on an E.C. mag. But if you're PLANNING to spend that dime on a comic mag, make it an E.C.! More than ever before, we need your business! WE NEED YOUR BUSINESS TO STAY IN BUSINESS!

Before closing just a word about RAY BRAD BURY - America's top horror and s.f. writer - who, as most of you probably know by now, has given E.C. permission to adapt some of his best stories. Mr. B's fascinating horror tale THE SMALL ASSASSIN, appears in this issue. Subscriptions to any E.C. mag will set you back 75c - six issues - full year's supply - mangle envelopes. Please keep writing your letters simultaneously inspire us and keep us on our toes to give you the best! Address for mail and subscriptions is:

The Editors
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5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed through the mail or otherwise, in paid publications during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was: (This information is required from daily, weekly, semi-weekly, and tri-weekly newspapers only.)

(Signed) FRANK D. LEE, Business Manager

Signed and subscribed before me this 4th day of September, 1952

Etienne De Stefano, Notary Public. (My commission expires March 30, 1954.)

BRACE YOURSELVES FOR THE STARTLING WIND-UP
TO THIS SCIENCE-FICTION YARN!

INFILTRATION



A SCIENCE-FICTION SUSPENSE STORY

WHEN I ARRIVED IN WASHINGTON, D.C., I REPORTED DIRECTLY TO COLONEL WAYNE SHAW IN THE PENTAGON BUILDINGS! HE READ MY LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION CAREFULLY... THEN LOOKED ME OVER...

HMMM! YES! WELL, I THINK YOU'LL DO NIGELY, MISS CURTISS! I'VE BEEN NEEDING A PRIVATE SECRETARY FOR SOME TIME NOW, AND YOU'RE JUST THE ONE TO FILL THE JOB!

THANK YOU, COLONEL! CAN YOU BRIEF ME ON JUST WHAT WORK THE GROUP HAS ACCOMPLISHED SINCE...

COLONEL SHAW GLANCED AROUND UNCOMFORTABLY AS I QUESTIONED HIM! HE BECKONED TO ME AND I DREW CLOSER...

WE'VE GOT TO BE VERY CAREFUL, MISS CURTISS! ALL OF THE WORK WE'VE DONE... ALL OF OUR PROGRESS TO DATE... IS IN GREAT DANGER! I SUSPECT THAT OUR GROUP HAS BEEN INFILTRATED!

YOU... YOU MEAN THAT THERE IS AN ALIEN AMONG US?



EXACTLY! SO YOU MUST BE ON GUARD AT ALL TIMES!

I UNDERSTAND, COLONEL!



THIS MAY COME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE TO YOU, BUT DO YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS A GOVERNMENT BUREAU, WORKING IN COOPERATION WITH THE ARMY, NAVY, AND F. B. I., SPECIFICALLY FORMED FOR THE PURPOSE OF INVESTIGATING AND FERRETING OUT MARTIAN INVADERS? COLONEL SHAW HEADS THAT BUREAU...

AND NOW, MISS CURTISS, THANK IF YOU'LL COME WITH ME, I'LL INTRODUCE YOU AROUND!



IT IS A *SMALL* GOVERNMENT AGENCY... *TOP SECRET!* WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE FLYING SAUGERS, THE THOUGHT THAT POSSIBLY AN UNDERCOVER INVASION WAS TAKING PLACE PROMPTED FORMATION OF THE BUREAU...

GENTLEMEN THIS IS THE BUREAU'S NEW SECRETARY! MISS CURTISS!

HY, MISS CURTISS!

GLAD TO MEET YOU, MA'AM!



MR. BRADY! I WONDER IF YOU WOULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO GIVE MISS CURTISS A BRIEF RESUME OF THE BUREAU'S HISTORY...

GLAD TO, MISS CURTISS! WILL YOU COME WITH ME?

LEAD THE WAY, MR. BRADY!



AS MR BRADY LED ME INTO THE FILE ROOM, I REMEMBERED COLONEL SHAW'S WARNING ABOUT BEING ON GUARD AT ALL TIMES! I RESOLVED TO MEASURE EVERY WORD I SPOKE...

AS YOU KNOW, MISS CURTISS, THE ARMY BELIEVES THAT FLYING SAUGERS MAY BE BRINGING MARTIANS TO EARTH AND LANDING THEM HERE!

...AND THAT THEY MAY BE INFILTRATING GOVERNMENT, POLITICS AND BUSINESS! YES, I KNOW THAT ...



... THAT THEY ARE COMPLETELY ALIEN IN FORM BUT, DUE TO A PROTECTIVE HYPNOTIC SCREEN WHICH THEY SURROUND THEMSELVES WITH, APPEAR AS HUMAN BEINGS!

MR. BRADY! I'VE BEEN THROUGH BASIC TRAINING! WHAT ABOUT THE AGENCY'S PROGRESS?



THESE ARE THE FILES OF ALL REPORTS DIRECTED TO THIS BUREAU CONCERNING POSSIBLE MARTIAN INVADERS! EACH REPORT IS CAREFULLY CHECKED!

AND SO FAR, NO PROOF HAS BEEN FOUND THAT MARTIANS EXIST!



CORRECT! EACH REPORT HAS BEEN FOLLOWED... ANALYZED... THE SUSPECTED INDIVIDUAL CHECKED... AND CLEARED!

SO WE ARE COMPARATIVELY SAFE...

SAFE, MISS CURTISS? NO! I DON'T THINK SO!

BUT YOU SAID ALL SUSPECTS HAVE BEEN CLEARED! DOESN'T THAT MEAN WE'RE SAFE?

THEY'RE GLEVER, MISS CURTISS! VERY GLEVER! WHY, I SUSPECT ALIENS HAVE INFILTRATED THIS VERY ORGANIZATION!



I'D BEEN ON GUARD! NOW, I BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF...

YES! I KNOW!

YOU KNOW? BUT HOW COULD YOU?

COLONEL SHAW WARNED ME THAT AN ALIEN WAS AMONG US! I'M SO GLAD IT'S NOT YOU, MR. BRADY! I...

PHIL! CALL ME PHIL! I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU OUT TONIGHT, MISS CURTISS... IF YOU'RE NOT BUSY...



NOT MISS CURTISS, PHIL! BETTY! WHY I'M NOT BUSY AT ALL TONIGHT! MAYBE WE CAN GO SOMEWHERE QUIET... AND YOU KNOW... LET DOWN OUR HAIR A LITTLE!

SAY... I'D LIKE THAT! FRANKLY, I'VE BEEN ON EDGE LATELY! I DON'T KNOW WHY!

I UNDERSTAND! IT'S THIS CONSTANT PRESSURE! IT'LL DO YOU GOOD TO RELAX A LITTLE! NOW, HOW ABOUT GOING ON WITH THE BRIEFING!

SURE, BETTY! BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE TO IT! THAT'S ABOUT THE WHOLE WORKS!



THE BRIEFING OVER, I LEFT MR. BRADY AND RETURNED ONCE MORE TO COLONEL SHAW'S OFFICE...

WELL, MISS CURTISS? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR MR. BRADY?

HE'S NICE, COLONEL! OF COURSE I DON'T KNOW HIM THE WAY I'D LIKE TO.



I DON'T THINK YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW HIM AT ALL, MISS CURTISS!

HE SEEMS NICE! HE ASKED ME OUT TONIGHT!



DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING STRANGE ABOUT BRADY, MISS CURTISS?

STRANGE? NO! OH... HE DID MENTION THAT HE KNEW OF THE ALIEN IN OUR MIST!



HAH! THAT'S A LAUGH! HE SHOULD KNOW! HE'S THE ONE! HE'S THE ALIEN!

BRADY?! OH, NO! I I HOPE I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING! BUT... THEN THEY KNOW ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION!



BRADY IS WORKING ALONE, MISS CURTISS! THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION, YET! YOU SAY THAT HE SUSPECTS THERE IS AN ALIEN IN OUR MIST?

YES! THAT'S WHAT HE SAID! I... THAT'S RIGHT! HE DID SAY THAT!



WE'VE GOT TO WORK FAST, MISS CURTISS! HE KNOWS SOMETHING! WE'VE GOT TO BRING THIS THING TO A SHOWDOWN... TONIGHT!

I'M GOING OUT WITH HIM TONIGHT!



GOOD! NOW THIS IS WHAT WE'LL DO! YOU ACT AS THOUGH YOU TRUST HIM... GO OUT WITH HIM! THEN... TOWARDS MIDNIGHT...



THAT NIGHT... ALTHOUGH I WAS EXTREMELY NERVOUS... I WENT OUT WITH OUR 'ALIEN MR BRADY'

IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT, PHIL! HOW ABOUT GOING BACK TO MY PLACE?

SOUNDS SWELL TO ME, BETTY! I'LL HAIL A CAB



THE CAB TOOK US ACROSS WASHINGTON TO MY APARTMENT HOUSE! AS I UNLOCKED MY APARTMENT DOOR...

SAY! NICE PLACE YOU'VE GOT HERE, BETTY!

I LIKE IT FOR AN EARTH APARTMENT!



EARTH APARTMENT? WHAT'S THE GAG, HON?

YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT, MR. BRADY! YOU'RE NOT ONE OF US! YOU'RE ONE OF THEM... ONE OF THE ALIENS!



HE STARED AT ME FOR A MOMENT...

WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN!

YES, MR. BRADY! A FOOL! OH, I WOULDN'T TRY ANYTHING! THIS IS A VERY POTENT EARTH AUTOMATIC!



I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED, WHEN YOU TOLD ME THAT COLONEL SHAW SUSPECTED AN ALIEN AMONG YOU... I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED THAT HE MEANT ME!

YES, MR. BRADY! YOU WEREN'T VERY CLEVER! WE REASONED EXACTLY THE SAME WAY!



COLONEL SHAW CAME OUT OF THE BEDROOM...

ONLY WE REASONED FIRST, MR. BRADY! TOO BAD!

HE'S ALL YOURS, SIR!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO ME?





MR BRADY STARED IN HORROR, AS FIRST COLONEL SHAW...



...AND THEN I DROPPED OUR HYPNOTIC SCREENS...



...AND THEN THE COLONEL EMPTIED THE EARTH AUTOMATIC INTO THE ALIEN EARTH-MAN'S QUIVERING BODY...



...AND LATER... IN A SECRET MEETING PLACE... WE REPORTED TO THE REST OF THE MARTIAN PERSONNEL OF THE SMALL GOVERNMENT AGENCY COMPLETELY IN CHARGE OF FERRETING OUT MARTIAN INVADERS...

THE ALIEN IN OUR MIDST HAS BEEN TAKEN CARE OF! OUR INFILTRATION OF EARTH CAN CONTINUE ON SCHEDULE!



HERE IS A TALE OF TENSION WITH SHEER HORROR
IN ITS BLOOD-CURDLING CLIMAX!

THE SMALL ASSASSIN!

JUST WHEN THE IDEA OCCURED TO HER THAT SHE WAS BEING MURDERED SHE COULD NOT TELL. THERE HAD BEEN LITTLE SUBTLE SIGNS, LITTLE SUSPICIONS FOR THE PAST MONTH; THINGS AS DEEP AS SEA TIDES IN HER. BUT NOW THE ROOM FLOATED AROUND HER IN AN EFFLUVIUM OF HYSTERIA. SHARP INSTRUMENTS HOVERED AND THERE WERE VOICES AND PEOPLE IN STERILE WHITE MASKS. SHE WAS ALONE WITH THOSE SILENT WHITE PEOPLE AND THERE WAS GREAT PAIN AND NAUSEA AND DEATH-FEAR IN HER, AND SHE THOUGHT TO HERSELF...

I AM BEING MURDERED BEFORE THEIR EYES! THESE DOCTORS, THESE NURSES DON'T REALIZE WHAT HIDDEN THING HAS HAPPENED TO ME! DAVID DOESN'T KNOW! NO ONE KNOWS EXCEPT ME... AND... THE KILLER, THE LITTLE MURDERER, THE SMALL ASSASSIN!



A HORROR SUSPENSTORY
ADAPTED FROM A TALE BY
RAY BRADBURY

FOOTSTEPS. GENTLE, APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS. THE SOUND OF PEOPLE TRYING TO BE QUIET. AN ODOOR OF TWEEDS, A PIPE, A CERTAIN SHAVING LOTION. SHE KNEW DAVID WAS STANDING OVER HER AND BEYOND, THE IMMACULATE ODOOR OF DR. JEFFERS. AND SHE THOUGHT TO HERSELF...

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET THE MURDERER, DAVID? WOULD YOU?

ALICE? ARE YOU AWAKE?



ALICE OPENED HER EYES. THE ROOM CAME INTO FOCUS. MOVING A WEAK HAND, SHE PULLED ASIDE THE COVERLET. THE 'MURDERER' LOOKED UP AT DAVID WITH A SMALL RED-FACED, BLUE-EYED CALM.

WHY... WHY HE'S A FINE BABY, ALICE!



DR. JEFFERS WAS WAITING FOR DAVID THE DAY HE SHOWED UP AT THE HOSPITAL TO TAKE HIS WIFE AND NEW CHILD HOME. HE MOTIONED DAVID INTO A CHAIR IN HIS OFFICE, SAT ON THE EDGE OF HIS DESK, AND LOOKED DAVID STRAIGHT IN THE EYE...



YOUR WIFE DOESN'T LIKE HER CHILD, DAVID?

WHAT?!

DR. JEFFERS CONTINUED...

IT'S BEEN A HARD THING FOR HER. THE WHOLE THING. SHE'LL NEED A LOT OF LOVE IN THIS NEXT YEAR. I DIDN'T MENTION IT AT THE TIME, BUT SHE WAS HYSTERICAL IN THE DELIVERY ROOM. SHE SAID, ALL I'LL SAY IS THAT SHE FEELS ALIEN TOWARD THE CHILD. IS... IS THIS CHILD A WANTED CHILD, DAVID?



YES! YES! IT'S A 'WANTED' CHILD. IT WAS PLANNED. WE PLANNED IT TOGETHER! ALICE WAS SO HAPPY A YEAR AGO WHEN...

IT MUST BE SOMETHING ELSE, THEN? PERHAPS SOMETHING BURIED IN HER CHILDHOOD. IN ANY CASE, IF SHE SAYS ANYTHING ABOUT... WELL... ABOUT WISHING THE CHILD HAD BEEN BORN DEAD, SMOOTH IT OVER, WILL YOU, SON?



SUPPERTIME... SOMETIME LATER, DAVID HAD BROUGHT THE CHILD FROM THE NURSERY, PROPPED HIM AT A TINY, BEMILDERED ANGLE, SUPPORTED BY MANY PILLOWS, IN A NEWLY PURCHASED HIGH CHAIR...



HE'S NOT HIGH-CHAIR SIZE YET, DAVID!

FUN HAVING HIM HERE, ANYWAY. EVERYTHING'S FUN, AT THE OFFICE, TOO. HEY, LOOK AT JUNIOR, WILL YOU? DROOLING ALL DOWN HIS CHIN.

DAVID REACHED OVER TO DAB AT THE BABY'S CHIN WITH HIS NAPKIN. FROM THE CORNER OF HIS EYE, HE REALIZED THAT ALICE WASN'T EVEN WATCHING, HE FINISHED THE JOB AND WENT BACK TO HIS FOOD...



I GUESS IT WASN'T VERY INTERESTING! BUT, ONE WOULD THINK A MOTHER'D TAKE SOME INTEREST IN HER OWN CHILD, WOULDN'T ONE?

DON'T SPEAK THAT WAY! NOT IN FRONT OF HIM! LATER IF YOU MUST!

AFTER DINNER ALICE LET DAVID CARRY THE BABY UPSTAIRS. WHEN HE CAME DOWN, SHE WAS STANDING BY THE RADIO, LISTENING TO MUSIC SHE WASN'T HEARING...



DAVID, DOES... DOES A BABY KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG?

NO, BUT IT WILL LEARN. WHY? WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING AT?

SUDDENLY ALICE STOPPED. HER ARMS DROPPED AND SHE TURNED SWIFTLY...



THAT NOISE! IN THERE! IN THE LIBRARY! WHAT WAS IT?

HUH? I DIDN'T HEAR!

DAVID CROSSED THE ROOM, OPENED THE LIBRARY DOOR, AND SWITCHED THE LIGHTS ON AND OFF...

NOT A THING. YOU'RE... Tired. C'mon to bed with you... **RIGHT NOW!**

FORGIVE ME, DAVID. I... I AM EXHAUSTED.



TURNING OUT THE LIGHTS TOGETHER, THEY WALKED QUIETLY UP THE SOUNDLESS HALL STAIRS, NOT SPEAKING. ALICE PAUSED, UNDECIDED, BY THE BEDROOM DOOR, THEN, FINGERING THE BRASS KNOB SHARPLY, WALKED IN. DAVID WATCHED HER APPROACH THE CRIB MUCH TOO CAREFULLY, LOOK DOWN, AND STIFFEN AS IF SHE'D BEEN STRUCK IN THE FACE...

DAVID!



DAVID REACHED THE CRIB AND LOOKED DOWN. THE BABY'S FACE WAS BRIGHT RED AND VERY MOIST. BRIGHT BLUE EYES STARED AS IF BEING STRANGLER OUTWARD...

OH... IT'S NOTHING. HE'S JUST BEEN CRYING!

HAS HE? I DIDN'T HEAR HIM CRYING!



DAVID UNDRESSED SILENTLY AND SAT ON THE EDGE OF THE BED. SUDDENLY, HE SNAPPED HIS FINGERS

DARN IT! I FORGOT TO TELL YOU! I HAVE TO FLY TO CHICAGO, FRIDAY!

OH, DAVID! SO SOON! I... I'M AFRAID TO BE ALONE!



HE WAS IN BED NOW, SHE DARKENED THE ROOM. HE HEARD HER WALK AROUND THE BED, THROW BACK CRISP SHEETS, AND SLIDE IN...

I'VE PUT OFF THIS TRIP FOR TWO MONTHS. I JUST HAVE TO GO.

BUT I'M AFRAID! YOU... YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME IF I TOLD YOU! I GUESS I'M CRAZY!



BEFORE HE COULD ANSWER... BEFORE HE COULD TELL HER HOW SILLY IT WAS, ALICE SWITCHED ON THE BED LIGHT, ABRUPTLY...



LOOK!

THE BABY LAY WIDE AWAKE IN ITS CRIB, STARING STRAIGHT AT THEM WITH DEEP SHARP BLUE EYES - THE EYES CLOSED. THE LIGHT WENT OUT AGAIN - SHE TREMBLED AGAINST HIM...

IT'S NOT NICE BEING AFRAID OF THE THING YOU BIRTHED - BUT HE TRIED TO KILL ME! HE LIES THERE LISTENING TO US TALKING, WAITING FOR YOU TO GO AWAY SO HE CAN TRY TO KILL ME AGAIN! I SWEAR IT!

PLEASE! STOP IT! STOP IT! PLEASE!



THE AIRPLANE WENT EAST WITH DAVID. THERE WAS A LOT OF SKY, A LOT OF CLOUDS, AND THEN CHICAGO CAME RUNNING OVER THE HORIZON. DAVID WAS DROPPED DOWN INTO A RUSH OF ORDERS, CONFERENCES, PLANNING, BANQUETING, AND THEN, ON HIS SIXTH DAY AWAY, HE RECEIVED A LONG DISTANCE PHONE CALL.

ALICE? NO, DAVE. THIS IS DR. JEFFERS SPEAKING. HOLD ON TO YOURSELF, SON. ALICE IS SICK! YOU'D BETTER GET THE NEXT PLANE HOME. IT'S PNEUMONIA! I'LL DO EVERYTHING I CAN, BOY. IF ONLY IT WASN'T SO SOON AFTER THE BABY! SHE NEEDS STRENGTH!



AFTER DOCTOR JEFFERS LEFT, ALICE CONFIDED IN DAVID...

IT WAS THE BABY, AGAIN, DAVID. I TRIED TO LIE TO MYSELF. CONVINCE MYSELF I'M A FOOL. BUT THE BABY KNEW I WAS WEAK FROM THE HOSPITAL, SO HE CRIED ALL NIGHT, AND WHEN HE WASN'T CRYING, HE'D BE TOO QUIET. IF I SWITCHED THE LIGHT ON, HE'D BE THERE, STARING AT ME.



ONE NIGHT, AFTER THE BABY'S CRIB HAD BEEN MOVED TO THE NURSERY, ALICE WAKENED, TREMBLING, AND SLID INTO HER HUSBAND'S ARMS.

THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE ROOM... WATCHING US!

OH, HONEY! YOU'RE JUST DREAMING!



HE HELD HER UNTIL SHE FELL ASLEEP AGAIN. THEN HE HEARD THE BEDROOM DOOR SWAY OPEN A FEW INCHES. THERE WAS NOBODY AT THE DOOR. NO REASON FOR IT TO COME OPEN. NO WIND...



THE AIRPLANE WENT WEST AND CALIFORNIA CAME UP AND OUT OF THE TWISTING CIRCULAR METAL OF PRD PELLERS CAME A VIBRATING SUDDEN MATERIALIZATION OF ALICE LYING IN BED, DR JEFFERS STANDING AT THE WINDOW, AND THE REALITY OF DAVID BEING THERE A LAST...

THE BABY WOULDN'T SLEEP. I THOUGHT HE WAS SICK. HE JUST LAY IN THE CRIB STARING. LATE AT NIGHT, HE'D CRY LOUD. HE'D CRY ALL NIGHT AND ALL NIGHT. I COULDN'T QUIET HIM. I COULDN'T SLEEP!

TIED HERSELF RIGHT INTO PNEUMONIA, DAVID, BUT SHE'S FULL OF SULFA DRUG NOW, AND SHE'S ON THE SAFE SIDE!



THE NEXT MORNING, DAVID WENT TO SEE DR JEFFERS! AND TOLD HIM THE WHOLE THING, AND LISTENED TO JEFFERS' TOLERANT REPLIES...

SO ALICE HATES THE BABY! THE BEST WAY TO PUT IT IS THAT SHE HAS AN OBSESSION. A CEASARIAN OPERATOR BROUGHT THE CHILD INTO THE WORLD, AND ALMOST TOOK ALICE OUT OF IT. SHE BLAMES THE CHILD FOR HER NEAR-DEATH AND HER PNEUMONIA. WE ALL DO IT. WE STUMBLE INTO A CHAIR AND CURSE THE FURNITURE, MISS A GOLF STROKE AND BLAME THE CLUB...



HE WAITED. IT SEEMED LIKE AN HOUR HE LAY SILENTLY, IN THE DARK. THEN, FAR AWAY, WAILING LIKE SOME METEOR DYING IN THE VAST INKY GULF OF SPACE, THE BABY BEGAN TO CRY IN HIS NURSERY...



CAREFULLY DISENGAGING ALICE'S GRIP, HE SLIPPED OUT OF BED, PUT ON HIS SLIPPERS, ROBE, AND TIPPED OUT OF THE ROOM TO THE STAIRS. THE BLACKNESS DROPPED OUT FROM UNDER HIM. HIS FOOT SLIPPED ON SOMETHING SOFT...SLIPPED AND PLUNGED INTO NOTHINGNESS...



HE THRUST HIS HANDS OUT, CAUGHT FRANTICALLY AT THE RAILING. HIS BODY STOPPED FALLING. HE HELD. HE CURSED. THE 'SOMETHING SOFT' THAT HAD CAUSED HIS FEET TO SLIP, RUSTLED AND THUMPED DOWN A FEW STEPS AND STOPPED. HIS HEAD RANG. HIS HEART HAMMERED AT THE BASE OF HIS THROAT, THICK AND SHOT WITH PAIN. HE PICKED IT UP. HIS HAND FROZE, STARTLED... HIS BREATH WENT IN. HIS HEART HELD ONE OR TWO BEATS. THE THING HE HELD IN HIS HAND WAS A *TOY*...A LARGE CUMBERSOME, PATCHWORK DOLL HE'D BROUGHT AS A JOKE FOR...



THE NEXT DAY WENT UNEASILY HE KEPT SEEING ALICE ALL THE TIME, MIXED INTO EVERYTHING HE LOOKED AT. SO MUCH OF HER FEAR HAD COME OVER TO HIM NOW. SHE ACTUALLY HAD *HIM* CONVINCED THAT THE CHILD WAS SOMEWHAT INNATURAL... WHAT... WHAT IF I

TOLD ALICE ABOUT THAT *TOY* I STUMBLED OVER LAST NIGHT? LORD, WOULDN'T *THAT* SEND HER OFF INTO HYSTERICS! NO, I WON'T TELL HER ABOUT THAT. IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT!



THAT NIGHT, DAVID TOOK A TAXI HOME, AS HE WALKED SLOWLY UP THE CEMENT WALK, ENJOYING THE LIGHT THAT WAS IN THE SKY AND THE TREES, THE WHITE COLONIAL FRONT OF THE HOUSE LOOKED UNNATURALLY SILENT AND UNINHABITED...



ONCE INSIDE, HE PUT HIS HAT ON THE CHAIR WITH HIS BRIEFCASE, STARTED TO SHRUG OFF HIS COAT, THEN LOOKED UP...



LATE SUNLIGHT STREAMED DOWN THE STAIR-WELL FROM THE WINDOW AT THE TOP OF THE HOUSE... ILLUMINATING THE PATCHWORK DOLL THAT SPRAWLED IN A GROTESQUE ANGLE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS.



ALICE LAY IN A BROKEN, PALLID GESTURING AND ANGLING OF HER THIN BODY. SHE WAS LYING AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS, LIKE A CRUMPLED DOLL WHO DOESN'T WANT TO PLAY ANY MORE... EVER. ALICE WAS DEAD.



HE HELD HER IN HIS ARMS BUT SHE WOULDN'T LIVE SHE WOULDN'T TRY TO LIVE HE SAID HER NAME OUT LOUD MANY TIMES, BUT IT DIDN'T HELP. SHE WAS DEAD!

HE MUST HAVE MADE A PHONE CALL. HE DIDN'T REMEMBER. HE FOUND HIMSELF SUDDENLY, UPSTAIRS, STARING AT THE CRIB. THE BABY'S EYES WERE CLOSED, BUT HIS FACE WAS RED, MOIST WITH PERSPIRATION...



SHE'S DEAD!
SHE'S DEAD!

THEN HE STARTED LAUGHING, LOW AND SOFT AND CONTINUOUS FOR A LONG TIME, UNTIL DR. JEFFERS WALKED OUT OF THE NIGHT-TIME AND SLAPPED HIM AGAIN AND AGAIN ACROSS HIS CHEEKS...

SNAP OUT OF IT!
PULL YOURSELF
TOGETHER, SON!

HE... HE KILLED
HER! HE...
KILLED HER!



IT WAS ELEVEN AT NIGHT A LOT OF STRANGE PEOPLE HAD COME AND GONE THROUGH THE HOUSE, TAKING THE ESSENTIAL FLAME WITH THEM... ALICE, DAVID SAT ACROSS FROM THE DOCTOR IN THE LIBRARY...

ALICE WASN'T
CRAZY, DOC.
SHE HAD
GDD
REASON TO
FEAR THE
BABY.

NOW YOU'RE FOLLOWING HER PATTERN - SHE BLAMED THE CHILD FOR HER SICKNESS, NOW YOU BLAME IT FOR HER DEATH. SHE STUMBLED ON A TOY, REMEMBER THAT! YOU CAN'T BLAME THE CHILD!



DAVID SHOOK HIS HEAD...

ALICE HEARD THINGS AT NIGHT. THINGS MOVING IN THE HALLS, AS IF SOMEONE SPIED ON US. YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT THOSE NOISES WERE, DOC? I'LL TELL YOU. THEY WERE MADE BY THE BABY! YES, MY SON! FOUR MONTHS OLD, CREEPING AROUND THE DARK HALLS AT NIGHT...

I WANT
YOU TO
STOP
THIS,
DAVID!



WHAT DO WE KNOW OF BABIES, DOCTOR? THE GENERAL KNOWLEDGE, YES. YOU KNOW OF COURSE, HOW BABIES KILL THEIR MOTHERS AT BIRTH WHY? IN RESENTMENT AT BEING FORGED INTO THIS LOUSY WORLD! BEING FORGED TO VAGATE FROM THE PEACE AND SAFETY OF ITS...

DAVID! YOU'RE
ALL WRONG!
I...



MANY INSECTS ARE SELF-SUFFICIENT WHEN THEY'RE BORN. IN A FEW DAYS, MOST MAMMALS AND BIRDS ARE ADJUSTED. LITTLE MAN-CHILDREN TAKE YEARS TO SPEAK, FALTERING ON RUBBERY LEGS. BUT, SUPPOSE ONE CHILD IN A MILLION IS... STRANGE! BORN PERFECTLY AWARE, ABLE TO THINK INSTINCTIVELY!

BDSH!



WOULDN'T IT BE A PERFECT SET-UP, A PERFECT BLIND FOR ANYTHING THE BABY MIGHT WANT TO DO? HE COULD PRETEND TO BE ORDINARY. WITH JUST A LITTLE EXPENDITURE OF ENERGY, HE COULD CRAWL AROUND A DARK HOUSE, LISTENING. HOW EASY TO CRY ALL NIGHT AND FIRE A MOTHER INTO PNEUMONIA. HOW EASY TO PLACE OBSTACLES AT THE TOP OF STAIRS. HOW EASY, RIGHT AT BIRTH, TO BE SO CLDSE TO THE MOTHER THAT A FEW DEFT MANEUVERS MIGHT CAUSE PERITONITIS... DEATH!

FOR GOD'S
SAKE, DAVID!
WHAT A
REPULSIVE
THING TO
SAY!



MY LITTLE BOY BABY, LYING IN HIS CRIB NIGHTS, HIS FACE MOST AND RED AND OUT OF BREATH. FROM **CRYING? NO!** FROM CLIMBING TEDIUSLY, AGH-INGLY SLOW, OUT OF HIS CRIB, FROM CRAWLING LONG DISTANCES THROUGH DARKENED HALLWAYS. MY LITTLE BOY BABY. I WANT TO **KILL HIM**...SOB

YOU'RE NOT KILLING ANYONE! YOU'RE GOING TO **SLEEP** FOR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS SLEEP WILL **CHANGE YOUR MIND**. HERE, TAKE THESE **PILLS**...



DAVID DRANK DOWN THE PILLS AND LET HIMSELF BE LED UPSTAIRS TO HIS BEDROOM, CRYING, AND FELT HIMSELF BEING PUT TO BED THE DOCTOR SAID GOOD-NIGHT AND LEFT THE HOUSE. DAVID, ALONE, DRIFTED TOWARD SLEEP. A NOISE...

WHA...WHAT'S THAT...



SOMETHING MOVED IN THE HALL? DAVID SLEPT...

THE NEXT MORNING, DOCTOR JEFFERS RETURNED AND LET HIMSELF IN, SOMEONE WAS GOING TO HAVE TO LOOK AFTER THE BABY. THERE WAS AN OODR OF GAS IN THE HOUSE. JEFFERS RAN UP THE STAIRS, CRASHED INTO DAVID'S ROOM...

COUGH...COUGH...



DAVID LAY ON THE BED, NOT MOVING. THE ROOM BILLOWED WITH GAS WHICH HISSED FROM AN UNLIT HEATER ON THE FLOOR NEAR THE OODR...

DAVID WAS DEAD. THE BODY WAS COLD. IT HAD ONLY BEEN DEAD A FEW HOURS...

HE...COUGH...HE **COULDN'T** HAVE TURNED THE GAS ON **HIMSELF!** THOSE **SEDATIVES** HAD KNOCKED HIM **OUT!** HE WOULDN'T HAVE **WAKENED** TILL **NOON!** BUT... BUT...



DR. JEFFERS WALKED TO THE NURSERY. THE OODR WAS **CLOSED**. HE OPENED IT AND WALKED INSIDE AND OVER TO THE CRIB. THE CRIB WAS **EMPTY**...

THE NURSERY OODR BLEW **SHUT**. YOU COULDN'T GET **BACK** TO YOUR CRIB YOU DIDN'T PLAN ON THE **DOOR** BLOWING SHUT



HE OPENED HIS MEDICAL BAG...

A LITTLE THING LIKE A **SLAMMED DOOR** CAN RUIN THE **BEST** OF PLANS WELL, I'LL **FIND** YOU SOMEWHERE IN THE HOUSE, HIDING. PRETENDING TO BE **SOMETHING** YOU ARE **NOT!**



SOMETHING RUSTLED DOWN THE HALL. SOMETHING SMALL AND VERY QUIET. JEFFERS CAME OUT OF THE NURSERY...

I HAD TO OPERATE TO BRING YOU **INTO** THIS WORLD. NOW I GUESS I CAN OPERATE TO TAKE YOU **OUT** OF...**SEE, BABY?** SOMETHING **BRIGHT!** SOMETHING **SHINY!**



A SCALPEL...

-THE END-

AL FELDSTEIN: A signature is a signature, and you shouldn't ask anyone to do someone else's handwriting.

Al Feldstein's exuberantly brutal cover for **Shock #7** was so immediate in its impact that some readers were left wondering "what was going on." They got a partial explanation in the letters page of #9, but what was really "going on" was that Feldstein was at the height of his powers as a writer/editor and knew it. The blistered, screaming face of a man struck by lightning, his back turned to his own reflection, is an apt introduction – **Caveat lector!** – to the second year of **Shock's** run.

"Beauty and the Beach" is a highpoint in the remarkable series of lead stories which Feldstein, working from Bill Gaines's springboards, scripted and laid out for Jack Kamen. Feldstein's success with this series is a tribute to his rapport with Gaines (who used the lead stories in **Shock**, beginning with "The Neat Job," to venture into areas of personal feeling previously unexplored in comics) and to his ability to anticipate how Kamen would visualize and dramatize his scripts. "Beauty and the Beach" shapes one of Gaines's pet themes – the milquetoast husband married to a vain, ambitious wife – into a deftly-balanced parallel narrative. Pages 4 and 6 are fine examples of Feldstein's emphatically symmetrical page layouts and Kamen's dynamic compositions and spillover effects coming together to create lucid and elegant comics.

"The Bribe" is memorable chiefly for its in-depth portrayal of Inspector Frank Wilson, the first believable villain in a **Shock** preachie since Lieutenant Staley in "Confession" (**Shock #4**). It is also noteworthy that Wallace Wood depicts Wilson as a solid-burgher type – he is virtually a dead ringer for Murray Voorhes in "So Shall Ye Reap" (**Shock #10**) – instead of the stock Corrupt Official from central casting.

Considering Bill Gaines's very mixed feelings about young children – "Halloween" (**Shock #2**) and "Sugar 'n Spice 'n" (**Shock #6**) are representative of his attitude – it is not hard to understand why Ray Bradbury's fantasies about children as an alien, malevolent life form would appeal to him. The subtle and oppressive mood of horror that pervades EC's adaptation of "The Small Assassin" is largely the result of George Evans's sensitive artwork. Almost every panel has a strong horizontal emphasis, we see the sky only in a few brief glimpses on page 6, and every image of the baby or his crib is genuinely terrifying. Surprisingly, Evans was never given another Bradbury story to illustrate.